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The People Would Like To Know

Official Washington is a 'twitter waiting to find out who really is responsible for the Cuban fiasco. But the truth will not out for two or three weeks. There is a strong disposition, from the President down, to say nothing until the committee named by Kennedy and headed by General Maxwell Taylor, former chief of staff of the Army, has made an investigation.

But there is plenty of speculation and there is some alibi-ing. Allen Dulles stoutly denies that the Central Intelligence Agency he heads had the wrong information on Cuba and that this is why the rebel movement backfired. At all events plenty of cloak-and-dagger activity is going on.

What seems to have been ordered is a three weeks cooling-off period so that the United States can preserve "face" as much as possible in the badly bungled affair which has once more loaded the Russians to fury with a destructive influence on peaceful co-existence.

The world press is more hostile than it was towards England and France over Anthony Eden's attempted coup in Suez and some of the leading journals of the world feel that part of the confidence which it has reposed in the new American dynamic leader has been sacrificed. Others say we have simply made ourselves ridiculous. A few applaud Kennedy for courage.

Mr. Kennedy has one firm foothold. He can argue that under the Monroe Doctrine, America had the duty to prevent Soviet interference on this side of the Atlantic—since Cuba can be considered part of the Americas, being only relatively few miles off the Florida coast. Unfortunately, there is a large opinion that we abrogated the Monroe Doctrine in 1917, and that most countries, especially Russia, have considered that it has long since been obsolete, governing themselves accordingly.

But there will be no abatement of interest in knowing who gave the order to proceed towards the ousting of Castro—whether it was the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the secretary of state or the President himself.

Never in the long history of American politics was there such a glaring instance of "the wrong dope" launching a dangerous enterprise.